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THE WORLD'S BEST NEWS & FACTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

SCIENCE
Secrets to why we laugh
p14

HOW TO
Create your own comics
p24

ANIMALS
Species that squeak, peep, and whistle
p10

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Making sense of the world

# THE WEEK Junior

THE BEST MAGAZINE FOR CURIOUS KIDS

# NOW THAT'S FUNNY!

Smile, giggle, and laugh through our first-ever humor issue

**MAKING HISTORY**
In 1944, Nancy Durant Edmonds was the first person of color to become a Science Talent Search finalist.

From left to right: winners Emily Ocasio, Neel Moudgal, and Ellen Xu

## Meeting the President

**Science Talent Search finalists have been meeting with US Presidents at the White House in Washington, DC, since 1947. Students met President John F. Kennedy (above, center) and Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson (left of Kennedy) in 1961. President George H.W. Bush called the STS "the Super Bowl of science."**

# Teens win top science awards

On March 14, 10 high school seniors in the US were awarded top prizes in a distinguished competition called the Regeneron Science Talent Search (STS).

### What is the competition?

STS is the nation's oldest and most prestigious youth STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) competition. It was launched in 1942 by a nonprofit organization now called the Society for Science, in partnership with Westinghouse Electric Corporation. In 1998, the technology company Intel began overseeing the competition, and in 2017, the drug company Regeneron took over. Each year, Regeneron awards $3.1 million in prizes to students and their schools. Past winners have gone on to create new companies, lead government agencies, invent medical treatments, and win awards, including 13 Nobel Prizes.

Maya Ajmera

### What happened this year?

Out of 1,929 students who applied for the awards, the top 300 scholars were announced in January. In March, 40 finalists attended Regeneron STS Finals Week in Washington, DC. Students presented their research to a panel of judges and thousands of guests, including leading scientists. The 10 winners were announced at a ceremony hosted by Soledad O'Brien, an award-winning documentarian, journalist, and philanthropist. The students investigated black holes in space, cancer treatment, climate change, and new ways to diagnose disease, among many other topics.

### How does the competition work?

Any US high school senior can apply by submitting an independent research project, which is reviewed by experts in the subject area. Finalists are chosen based on scientific rigor (how well a project meets scientific standards), problem-solving, and the student's potential to be a leader. The top 300 scholars receive $2,000 each, and their schools receive $2,000 each to support STEM education. The 40 finalists won prizes ranging from $40,000 to the first-place prize of $250,000.

### Who are the top winners?

Neel Moudgal, age 17, of Michigan won first place for creating a computer model that can quickly predict the structure of RNA molecules (a complex chemical that carries instructions for how a living thing should grow and develop). Moudgal believes this model will make it easier to diagnose and treat certain diseases, including cancer and lupus. Second place and a $175,000 prize went to Emily Ocasio, age 18, of Virginia. Ocasio used artificial intelligence (when a computer imitates human intelligence by learning as it goes along) to scan crime coverage in *The Boston Globe* from 1976 to 1984. She found that white crime victims were described in more sympathetic language than Black crime victims. Ellen Xu, age 17, of California, won third place and $150,000. She developed an algorithm (instructions for solving a problem or performing a computation) that uses a photo of patients to help diagnose Kawasaki disease. The illness is a cause of heart disease in children ages 1 to 5. Learn more about the winners at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Regeneron2023.

### How did people react?

The winners were surprised and excited. Moudgal said, "When I was chosen, it was totally unreal and I really felt like I was dreaming for a while." Ocasio told *The Washington Post* that she felt "so beyond overwhelmed" by her award. Maya Ajmera, head of the Society for Science, said the awards were well deserved. "These young leaders are the stewards of our future," she said. "I am in awe of their creativity and conviction."

# New law sparks outrage in France

Protesters filled the streets across France after President Emmanuel Macron raised the nation's retirement age from 62 to 64. On March 16, Macron used a special constitutional power to push through the change without a vote by parliament (similar to Congress).

The retirement age is the age at which someone can stop working and become eligible to receive money from government pension plans. Workers contribute to these funds throughout their lives with money from their paychecks. Macron argues that unless people contribute two additional years of payments, the fund will run out of money. Citizens are angry that they will have to work two years longer and have been demonstrating against the changes since January.

Many government officials are unhappy that Macron used his power to push through the change. On March 20, his opponents in parliament held a vote to force part of his government to resign. They lost by nine votes but are continuing to call for Macron to reverse his decision.

Emmanuel Macron

**DID YOU KNOW?**
During Ramadan in Istanbul, Turkey, drummers in traditional clothing wake residents for the morning meal.

People praying during Ramadan

# Holy month of Ramadan begins

The holy month of Ramadan began on the night of March 22 for nearly 2 billion Muslims (people who follow the religion of Islam) around the world. The holiday is the ninth month in the Islamic lunar calendar and begins when the crescent moon is seen after sunset. Muslims believe that it was during Ramadan in the year 610 when Allah (God) first revealed the Quran (religious text) to Islam's founder, the Prophet Muhammad.

Ramadan is a time to strengthen faith through reflection and prayer. During Ramadan, people give to charity, go to mosques (places of worship), and fast (do not eat or drink) during daylight hours. Fasting is a way to practice patience and show empathy for those without food or water. Children, the elderly, sick people, and pregnant women do not have to fast. Muslims who fast eat a meal called *suhoor* before sunrise. After sunset, they join friends and family for a meal called *iftar*. Traditionally, they eat dates first, which is how Muhammad broke the fast.

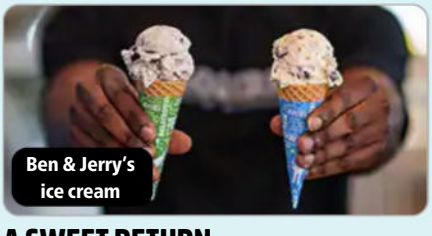
During Ramadan, some businesses close and communities hold events. The annual Sharjah Ramadan Festival in the United Arab Emirates draws thousands of visitors for religious activities and cultural performances. In the city of Dubai, hundreds of religious and other leaders will gather to share iftar meals. Around the world, families will celebrate together in mosques and homes. Ramadan ends with the start of Eid al-Fitr on April 21. The three-day festival includes special prayers, meals with relatives, and an exchange of gifts.

# IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

## A MUSIC MILESTONE

**A report found that in 2022, vinyl records outsold compact discs (CDs) for the first time since 1987. People bought 41 million records and 33 million CDs. Artists like Taylor Swift and Adele helped drive the trend by releasing records on vinyl.**

Vinyl record albums


Ben & Jerry's ice cream

## A SWEET RETURN

**After a four-year break, Ben & Jerry's annual Free Cone Day returns on April 3, when people can score a scoop at the company's shops around the world. The tradition began in 1979 as a way to thank customers. "We love you too, and Free Cone Day is our favorite way to show it!" Ben & Jerry's said.**

## DELIVERING THE DOUGH

**Maggie Mahoney, age 8, collected 10,189 cans of Play-Doh for Blank Children's Hospital in Iowa, where her sister Riley was treated for cancer. The sisters played with Play-Doh during Riley's treatment, and Maggie wanted other patients and their families to be able to do the same. "I think they're going to be very happy," she said.**

Maggie (front) and Riley

ON THE COVER: GETTY IMAGES (4); ON THIS PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (3); BEN & JERRY'S; HEARST; ON LEFT PAGE: SOCIETY FOR SCIENCE/CHRIS AYERS PHOTOGRAPHY; SOCIETY FOR SCIENCE (2)

Oil drilling in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

## Bears in Alaska

A polar bear

All three North American bear species live in Alaska. One species goes by two names: It's called a brown bear along the coast and a grizzly inland. Black bears are the smallest and, despite their name, can be white or brown. Polar bears spend so much time swimming that they're considered marine mammals.

# Alaska drilling project moves ahead

President Joe Biden's administration has approved a controversial oil drilling project, known as the Willow project, in Alaska. Energy industry officials support it, while others say the project would harm the environment.

### What is the project?

The Willow project, proposed by the oil company ConcocoPhillips in 2020, would extract up to 600 million barrels of oil over 30 years from an additional part of the National Petroleum Reserve. This is an area in the north of Alaska owned by the federal government. After conducting an environmental analysis, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM, US agency that protects land) recommended scaling back from five to three drill sites and building fewer roads and airstrips. Administration officials said the project could move ahead if the BLM's recommendations were made.

### Why do some people support it?

Industry officials said the project would allow the US to drill for its own oil instead of relying on oil from other countries. In particular, the US could avoid buying oil from Russia, which is using profits to pay for its war against Ukraine. The Willow project could also create about 2,500 jobs and up to $17 billion in revenue for the federal government. Some native communities and labor unions support the project for these reasons.

### Why are some people against it?

Environmental groups argue that the project would increase climate change. Each year, the oil extracted could produce 9.2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, a gas that traps heat in the atmosphere. That amount is equal to adding about 2 million gas-powered cars to the roads, according to government estimates. Drilling could also have a negative impact on wildlife, including migratory birds, whales, polar bears, and caribou. More than 3 million people signed an online petition protesting the project.

### What will happen next?

The administration is expected to make a final decision about the Willow project in the next month. In the meantime, government officials are considering steps that would reduce the plan's environmental impact, such as planting trees, which help prevent carbon dioxide from being released into the atmosphere.

## WORD OF THE WEEK

**COMEDY**

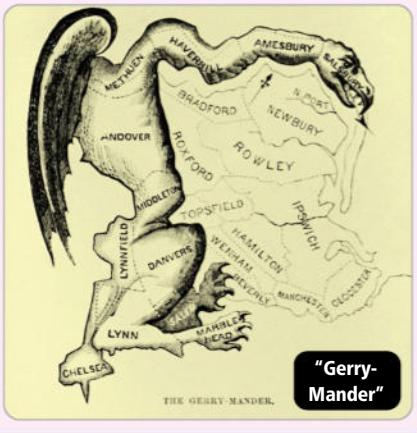
The word "comedy" is based on the Greek *komos* ("merry-making"), and *aoidos*, a "singer" or "poet." Ancient Greek comedies often involved a chorus of actors who performed song and dance routines, as well as spoken parts.

## THE WEEK IN HISTORY

### March 26, 1826

Cartoon creates a new word

On March 26, 1826, a political cartoon in *The Boston Gazette* mocked a proposal by Massachusetts governor Eldridge Gerry to create a new voting district that would favor his political party. The cartoon depicted the district as a salamander and was labeled "Gerry-Mander." Today "gerrymander" is used to describe unusually shaped districts that have been redrawn to favor one party.



"Gerry-Mander"

Part of the monument

## In honor of Harriet Tubman

A monument to Harriet Tubman has been unveiled in the newly renamed Harriet Tubman Square in Newark, New Jersey. Tubman, who was born into slavery in the 1800s and escaped, led other enslaved people to freedom through the Underground Railroad, a secret network of routes and safe houses. The 25-foot monument features a "learning wall" with recordings about her life and Black American activism in Newark.

## Big bookstore chain to expand

Barnes & Noble is planning its largest expansion in more than 10 years. After years of losing sales to online retailer Amazon, the bookseller will open 30 stores across the US this year. Many will open in areas where stores had previously closed. One industry leader said Barnes & Noble should succeed because consumers are happy to be back in bookstores.

A French bulldog

## Favorite dog breed in US named

The French bulldog is the most popular dog breed in the US, according to the American Kennel Club, which maintains the largest registry of purebred dogs in the world. The bulldog beat out the Labrador retriever, which fell to second place after holding the top spot for 31 years. Rounding out the top five, in order, were the golden retriever, German shepherd, and poodle.

An example of the new spacesuit

**PREPARE FOR LIFTOFF**
The last time NASA sent a mission of astronauts to the Moon was in December 1972.

# NASA introduces new spacesuits

The US space agency, NASA, unveiled a prototype (early test model) of the suits astronauts will wear when they go to the Moon. Made by the company Axiom Space, the new suit is called the Axiom Extravehicular Mobility Unit, or AxEMU. The first major design change in 40 years, it was introduced at an event at NASA's Space Center in Houston.

NASA will return astronauts to the Moon with its Artemis III mission in 2025. During this mission, the agency plans to land the first woman and the first person of color on the Moon. The first woman will also walk on the Moon with Artemis III.

The new suits should be easier for astronauts to walk in than the suits previously worn by astronauts on the Moon. At the event, James Stein, the chief engineer of the suit, demonstrated how easily he could squat and move around while wearing it.

The helmet has a large clear visor for improved visibility as well as lights on each side and a mount for a high-definition camera to record video. The life support system, attached to the back like a scuba tank, will let astronauts take spacewalks for up to eight hours, which is two hours longer than current suits allow.

While the prototype is black with blue and orange highlights, the suits that astronauts wear on the Moon will be white, in order to reflect heat from the Sun. The suit is also designed to keep astronauts warm in the freezing temperatures of the lunar south pole, which astronauts will be exploring for the first time. According to former NASA astronaut Peggy Whitson, this is also the first spacesuit specifically designed to fit a woman.

"Axiom's next generation spacesuits will not only enable the first woman to walk on the Moon, but they will also open opportunities for more people to explore and conduct science on the Moon than ever before," said NASA Administrator Bill Nelson.

The logo for NASA's Artemis missions

## THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

**"Owl stows away for two-week trip on Royal Caribbean cruise ship"** *UPI*

AXIOM; ARTEMIS; GETTY IMAGES (4); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (3); AP

The boys' choir singing

## Spain
### Girls admitted to boys' choir

One of the oldest boys' choirs in Europe will admit girls and women as members for the first time in more than 700 years. The Escolania choir is from the Santa Maria de Montserrat abbey (a place where monks or nuns live) in Catalonia, Spain. Its members, ages 9 to 14 years, perform every day of the year. A new mixed chamber choir of girls, women, and boys from ages 17 to 24 will perform one weekend a month while the boys' choir rests.

Protesters on the streets

## Nairobi, Kenya
### Protests against president

A university student was killed and more than 200 people were arrested in nationwide protests against Kenya's president, William Ruto. The demonstrations were led by Raila Odinga, who has tried to become Kenya's president five times. Odinga believes that the last elections, in August 2022, were not fair and that Ruto's government is to blame for the rising cost of basic items, like food and fuel.

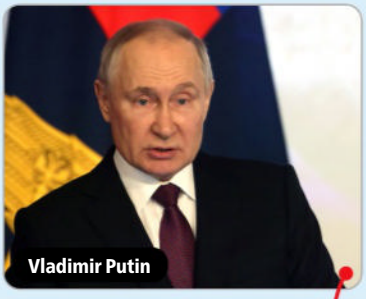
A customer shops for produce.

## Argentina
### Soaring prices cause struggles

Argentina's annual inflation rate has reached 102.5%, its highest in more than 30 years. Because inflation (the rate of increase in the cost of goods and services) is so high, many Argentines are struggling to afford the items they need. Experts say the soaring prices have been caused by banks printing more money, which reduces its value, as well as Russia's war in Ukraine.

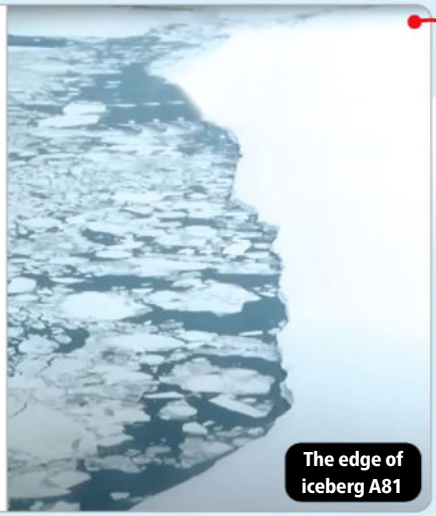
## The Netherlands
### Arrest warrant issued for Putin

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued a warrant for the arrest of Russian President Vladimir Putin. The ICC, a global court based in the Hague, a city in the Netherlands, said there are reasonable grounds for believing Putin bears responsibility for war crimes, which include unlawfully deporting children from Ukraine to Russia.


Vladimir Putin

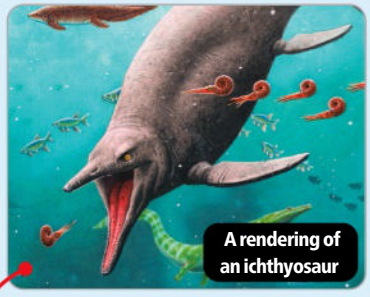
## Antarctica
### Scientists track the movement of giant icebergs

British researchers are tracking two of the world's largest icebergs, named A81 and A76, which broke off from Antarctica. The enormous, flat icebergs have been compared to the size of big cities and can reportedly take decades to melt away. The wind and ocean currents are driving the icebergs north. Experts are concerned that the icebergs may cause problems for ships, wildlife, and people.


The edge of iceberg A81

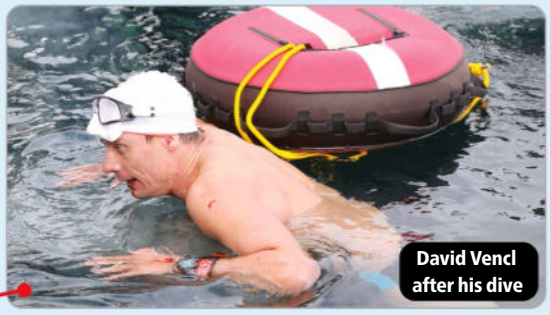
ALAMY (2); GETTY IMAGES (5); ESTHER VAN HULSEN/HANDOUT/REUTERS; BAS; SHUTTERSTOCK

# Around the world


A rendering of an ichthyosaur

## Spitsbergen, Norway
### Fossils found

Fossils discovered in Norway suggest that ichthyosaurs—a marine reptile that looked like a dolphin or whale—lived earlier than previously thought. Scientists believed the first ichthyosaurs lived 2 million years after Earth's mass extinction 252 million years ago, but the new fossils show they could have existed before it.


David Vencl after his dive

## Switzerland
### Diver breaks icy world record

David Vencl plunged into the frozen Lake Sils in Switzerland, reaching a depth of about 170 feet, without wearing a wetsuit to help him stay warm. The 40-year-old from the Czech Republic dove through a hole in the ice and held his breath for one minute and 54 seconds in order to retrieve a sticker that proved the depth of his dive. Vencl also holds the world record for swimming the length of a frozen lake underwater.

The banned books

## Hong Kong
### Controversy over children's books

Two men in Hong Kong were arrested for owning British children's books that officials called "seditious" (encouraging people to disobey the government). The banned books were about sheep that were trying to keep wolves away from their village. The officials claimed the wolves represented the Chinese government, and that the books were critical of the law introduced in 2019 that extended control of Hong Kong by China.

An early walk to school

## Kupang, Indonesia
### Students start school at 5:30 am

Twelfth-grade students (ages 16–17) at 10 Indonesian high schools now need to get to school by 5:30 am. School typically began between 7:00 am and 8:00 am, but local government officials believe that starting earlier will improve students' discipline. Parents have complained that the children have to walk to school in the dark and are tired after long days.

## Punjab, India
### Internet shutdown

Authorities in Punjab, an Indian state, shut down mobile internet access from March 18–21. The move came as police searched for Amritpal Singh, a man who wants to establish a separate state within Punjab for people who follow the Sikh religion (the majority of the state's population). The internet shutdown was aimed at stopping Singh's supporters from spreading false information and affected about 27 million people.

Police conduct searches.

# Is comedy better than drama?

**Some people go for the laughter, while others like to be swept away by feelings.**

## What you need to know

- **Dramatic books, plays, movies, or TV shows have a serious tone or subject. They portray life in a way that involves emotions and conflicts.**
- **Comedy is light and humorous, with a happy or cheerful ending. Comedies usually show funny situations and make the audience laugh.**
- **Popular comedy movies in the US include *Minions*, *Shrek*, and *Home Alone*. Dramas include *The Lion King*, *Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio*, and *Avengers: Endgame*.**

**A LITTLE OF BOTH**
A story, show, or movie that combines elements of comedy and drama is known as a "dramedy."

With so many options to choose from, picking a book, show, or film to enjoy can be a difficult decision. When it's time to select something to watch or read, some people decide on a fun comedy, while others go for a captivating drama. Those who like comedies usually enjoy them because they offer goofy gags, funny jokes, and amusing situations. They provide relief from the more serious aspects of life—something everyone needs from time to time. Dramas have a lot going for them, too, including interesting stories, compelling characters, and emotional themes. What do you think? Is comedy better than drama?

### Yes—laughter is the best medicine

Everyone loves to laugh. And studies show that laughter can reduce stress, relieve pain, and improve the immune system. Funny stories make the world seem a little brighter and can even cheer up people who are sad. That's because when someone sits down to watch or read a comedy, they can stop thinking about their worries for a little while and enjoy the lighter side of life. But creating good comedy is a serious matter. It requires many of the same elements as drama—including a strong plot and relatable characters—but also needs hilarious jokes and great timing. Comedy is an art form worth appreciating.

### No—people need to get real

Drama explores real issues in a serious way. It can educate viewers about how to face problems in their lives and have better relationships with one another. They can see how characters deal with a situation and apply these lessons to their own lives. Meanwhile, the experience of watching or reading a dramatic story may help people cope with difficult feelings. It allows people to experience some big emotions—maybe even cry—which often makes them feel better afterward. And for those who just want an escape from reality, drama keeps them on the edge of their seats, excited to see what happens next.

### YES Three reasons why comedy is better than drama

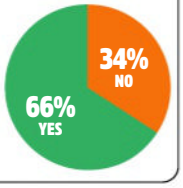
1. **Studies have shown that laughter is good for your health.**
2. **Comedy has the power to cheer people up, make them happier, and help them forget about their problems.**
3. **Creating good comedy takes at least as much skill as creating a drama does—maybe more. It's an art form unto itself.**

### NO Three reasons why comedy is not better than drama

1. **Drama takes a serious look at real issues and teaches important lessons.**
2. **Watching or reading drama helps people understand their own experiences and deal with their feelings.**
3. **Drama is gripping. It holds the viewer's attention, gets your heart pumping, and provides a thrilling escape.**

## LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if museum admission should be free. Most of you said access to art should not cost anything: 66% of you said yes, and 34% said no.




## What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit kids.theweekjunior.com/polls so you can vote in our debate. Vote YES if you think comedy is better than drama or NO if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

**The goal of the big debate** is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.

ALAMY

# Reporting funny stories

Ben Hooper is a reporter for United Press International (UPI) who covers odd news, such as bears taking dips in swimming pools. He spoke to *The Week Junior* about what it's like to report on the strange and often hilarious stories going on around the world.

**How did you start out in journalism?**
My mother worked for UPI, and growing up I wanted to be a journalist like her. I started at UPI part-time in college, writing short newswire stories. I ended up doing what we called "the quirks section," which grew to become what is now called "the odd news section."

**What do you love most about your job?**
Interviewing people who are enthusiastic about bizarre things. Talking to everyday people with unusual passions has become my passion.

**How do you find your stories?**
In the beginning, I would pick up stories from other news outlets. Now I have direct contacts, such as international animal rescue groups and fire departments across the US, sending me interesting news releases. Some people also contact me directly, like a man in Idaho named David Rush, who likes breaking world records. He emails me weekly with a record he has just broken. It has been really fun and rewarding building these relationships.

**What's one of your favorite odd news stories?**
I wrote a story about beaches in France, where, for 30 years, plastic Garfield the Cat phones kept washing up. They finally found out it was due to a nearby abandoned shipping container that was full of them.

**What advice do you have for aspiring "odd news" writers?**
The two most important things are that you have to read a lot and you have to write a lot. It requires learning and doing. Nobody is born with it, and it's all a matter of practice.

**DID YOU KNOW?**
UPI was founded in 1907 by E.W. Scripps, the same company that sponsors the National Spelling Bee.

# A star TV comedian

Writer and actress Quinta Brunson, age 33, continues to receive praise for *Abbott Elementary*, the hit sitcom she created and stars in. It follows teachers at a fictional elementary school in Philadelphia, where Brunson grew up. This year, *Abbott Elementary* won three Golden Globes (top Hollywood award), while Brunson won a Screen Actors Guild award (top acting honor). "Comedy brings people together," she said while accepting one of the Golden Globes, adding that she's happy her show makes so many people laugh.

Quinta Brunson

George Lopez

# Inspiring with humor

George Lopez, age 61, a famous comedian, actor, and author, announced that the next book in his humorous middle-grade series *ChupaCarter* is coming in May. Titled *ChupaCarter and the Haunted Piñata*, it continues the adventures of 12-year-old Jorge and his friends. Lopez told *People* magazine that his goal with these books is to introduce readers to the Latin heritage and folklore he grew up with. The new book features a celebration of the Mexican holiday Day of the Dead, for example. Lopez told *People* that inspiring young people is "the most lasting legacy."

## OVERHEARD

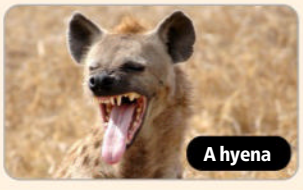
**"Like most people, everything goes back to parents. I'm a child of immigrants, and that unexpectedly became my secret weapon."**
Mindy Kaling, comedy actress, writer, and producer, in her acceptance speech for the Norman Lear Achievement Award, which recognized her accomplishments in TV over the past 20 years

COURTESY OF BEN HOOPER; UPI; GETTY IMAGES (3)

HUMOR ISSUE

## A hyena's "laugh"

**Spotted hyenas are known for their unusual call that sounds like giggling or cackling laughter. But it's not a sense of humor that causes a hyena to "laugh." The animals make these high-pitched sounds when they are feeling excited, frustrated, or nervous. When hyenas play together, they make different noises.**


A hyena

# The animal species that laugh

Animals can laugh too. Their "laughter" may not sound like ours, but scientists have learned that many animals make faces and sounds that serve the same purpose as human laughter.

A 2021 study by Sasha Winkler and Greg Bryant from the University of California, Los Angeles, found that at least 65 different species make specific noises when they are playing. Scientists call these sounds play vocalizations or vocal messages. Bottlenose dolphins whistle and squawk while they play, elk squeal, and if rats are tickled, they make a high-pitched trill. "When dogs play, they like to bark, growl, and pant really heavy. Monkeys like to make peeps and whistles, and even birds will chirp in a special way," Bryant told *The Week Junior*. "The animals are telling each other they are having fun."

Chimpanzees are very expressive.

Playing can look a lot like fighting among animals, so these sounds make it clear that an animal means no harm. Bryant said, "If you are pretending to attack someone, you don't want them to think you are really attacking, because then they might get scared and even attack back!" Play vocal messages help animals enjoy games without fear.

But it's not just the sound of a laugh that matters. In 2022, scientists Marina Davila-Ross and Elisabetta Palagi looked at the faces animals make during play. Several species—including chimpanzees, macaques, lions, meerkats, and African wild dogs—open their mouths wide in a laughing expression when they are having fun. Researchers think this might have originally come from the movements made during playful biting. Today, however, a wide-mouthed "laugh face" can be enough for animals to show that it's playtime. The expression may help them feel happy and build positive relationships with one another.

Davila-Ross told *The Week Junior* that future studies could see whether other types of animals also have laugh faces, and whether animals show laughter outside of play. This research "allows us to empathize more with animals," Davila-Ross said, which leads people "to treat animals better."

## PLACE OF THE WEEK

### Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park, Nevada

**About five hours north of Las Vegas, this state park on the Shoshone Mountain range has one of the country's largest collections of ichthyosaur fossils. Ichthyosaurs, large aquatic reptiles similar to porpoises, lived there about 225 million years ago, when the region was an ocean. Today, the desert landscape is home to plants such as the Utah juniper and big sagebrush and animals including whiptail lizards, western bluebirds, pronghorns, and mule deer. The park also offers access to the American Discovery Trail, a 6,800-mile trail across the US.**

A pronghorn in the park

**FUN FACTS**
Octopuses have three hearts, and their blood is blue rather than red.

An octopus flexes its eight agile arms.

# Octopus arms "think" together

Octopuses are experts at using their flexible arms, which are covered with suckers on one side. Experts at the University of Chicago have discovered that octopus arms are connected in a unique pattern.

An octopus has one central brain. But in each of its eight arms, it also has a sort of mini-brain: a group of four intramuscular nerve cords (INCs) that contain neurons (cells that carry information throughout the brain and nervous system). These cords transmit messages down the arm, such as telling muscles when to move.

When the researchers looked at young octopuses with a powerful microscope, they discovered that the INCs closest to the suckers did not end in one individual arm. They stretched through the octopus's body and into another arm on the other side. The pattern was repeated in every arm.

"We haven't seen anything like this in other animals," said researcher Melina Hale. The team believes this arrangement allows for easy and quick coordination between multiple arms. They plan to study whether, and how, the arms communicate.

## Animal of the week: Clownfish

**These "clowns" are some of the most striking fish in the sea. They live among tentacled plants called sea anemones, which provide them with protection and food. In return, the fish clean and help to nourish the anemones.**

- **LIFE SPAN:** 8 years in the wild, 12 in captivity
- **HABITAT:** Reefs and lagoons
- **SIZE:** A little over 3 inches long on average
- **DIET:** Includes algae and zooplankton
- **FUN FACT:** All clownfish are born as males, but some later become females.

## Good week / Bad week

### California flowers

A superbloom, when a high number of wildflowers bloom at once, has begun in California. Officials are urging visitors to be respectful of the plants. One popular site, Walker Canyon, has closed to the public to protect its golden poppies.

### Horseshoe crabs

Horseshoe crabs, which have lived for more than 475 million years, are on the decline. Researchers say the reasons include habitat loss and humans hunting the crabs for food, fishing bait, and use in medical research.

## Ask a zookeeper: "How do owls turn their heads all the way around?"

Josh, 8, South Carolina

**Maggie Lubarski**
Zoo keeper,
Potawatomi Zoo

An owl can't fully turn its head 360 degrees, but it can get to 270 degrees. In the owl's neck, an artery (blood vessel) to the brain passes through big holes in the vertebrae (bones of the spine). The extra room allows the artery to be flexible, so blood can still flow as the head rotates.

A burrowing owl

Do you have a question for a zookeeper? Send it to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.
Find out more about Oregon Zoo at potawatomizoo.org.

GETTY IMAGES (5); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (6); ALAMY (2)

# A hilarious holiday

**A worldwide tradition of innocent pranks and jokes started in France.**

April Fools' Day, a day for fun, pranks, and practical jokes, is the most recognized non-religious holiday in the world. Its humorous history started centuries ago.

Charles IX

## How it began

No one knows the exact origin of April Fools' Day. However, several theories exist. In the late 1500s, King Charles IX decided to move his country, France, from the Julian calendar, which started the new year around April 1, to the Gregorian calendar, which started the year on January 1. News spread through the country slowly, and people who still mistakenly celebrated the New Year in April were called "April fools." April Fools' Day has also been linked to the festival Hilaria, which was celebrated in ancient Rome at the end of March. People enjoyed feasts, played games, and dressed in disguise.

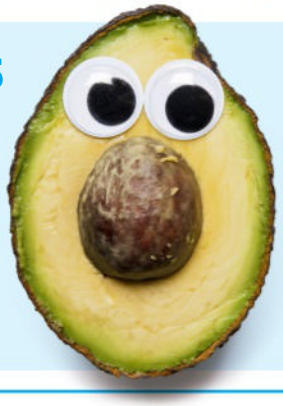
"Spaghetti trees"

## The laughter spreads

One of the first mentions of April Fools' Day in English appeared in a book in 1686. Author John Aubrey referred to April 1 as the "fooles holy day." In London in 1698, people were tricked into visiting the Tower of London for the "washing of the lions," a fake ceremony. The next day, the local paper announced it was a hoax (practical joke). In 1752, the UK also changed its calendar to begin on January 1, and April Fools' Day became more popular over the decades. A famous prank aired in the UK on April 1,1957, when the BBC news station broadcast a hoax report about "spaghetti farmers" harvesting pasta from "spaghetti trees."

## Popular pranks

Are you hoping to pull off the perfect April Fools' Day joke this year? Come up with your own clever idea, or take your inspiration from one of these classic pranks that have stood the test of time.



### Eye full

Make people look twice by attaching sets of googly eyes to inanimate objects or food around the house. Try placing eyes on an avocado, an egg, or someone's school books. Then act as if nothing is strange.

GETTY IMAGES (10); BBC

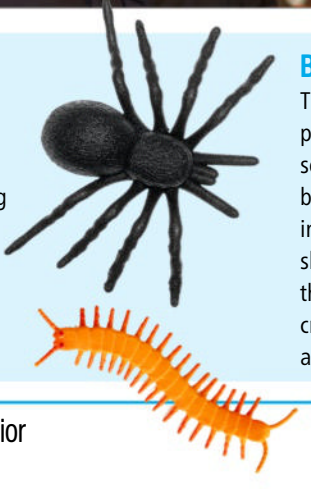
*It's a whoopee cushion, which makes noise when you sit on it. Invented in the 1930s by a Canadian rubber company, it remains one of the most popular April Fools' Day pranks today.

# for everyone

**TWICE THE FUN**
In Scotland, April Fools' Day is a two-day celebration also known as "Gowkie Day."

## Colorful surprise

On the morning of April 1, before other family members wake up, put a few drops of food coloring in the milk carton and then shake it up. Red, blue, or green work best. Wait nearby and watch for the reaction.



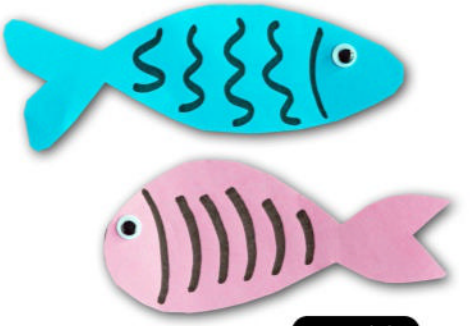
## Bugging out

This April Fools' Day prank is a classic. Grab some plastic or rubber bugs, and sneak a few inside family members' shoes. When they slip them on, they'll feel the creepy crawlers inside for a squishy surprise.

Chattering teeth

## Celebrating in the US

April Fools' Day came to America with European settlers and was mentioned in a US diary entry as early as 1771. Over the next century, the day grew in popularity around the US, and by the mid- to late 1800s, schoolchildren started playing pranks on their teachers. By the late 1800s, April Fools' Day began to appear in folk songs (a type of song originating in traditional popular culture), including "The First Day of April." In the 1930s and 1940s, novelty toys, like wind-up chattering teeth and whoopee cushions, became popular gags to leave on someone's chair or desk.

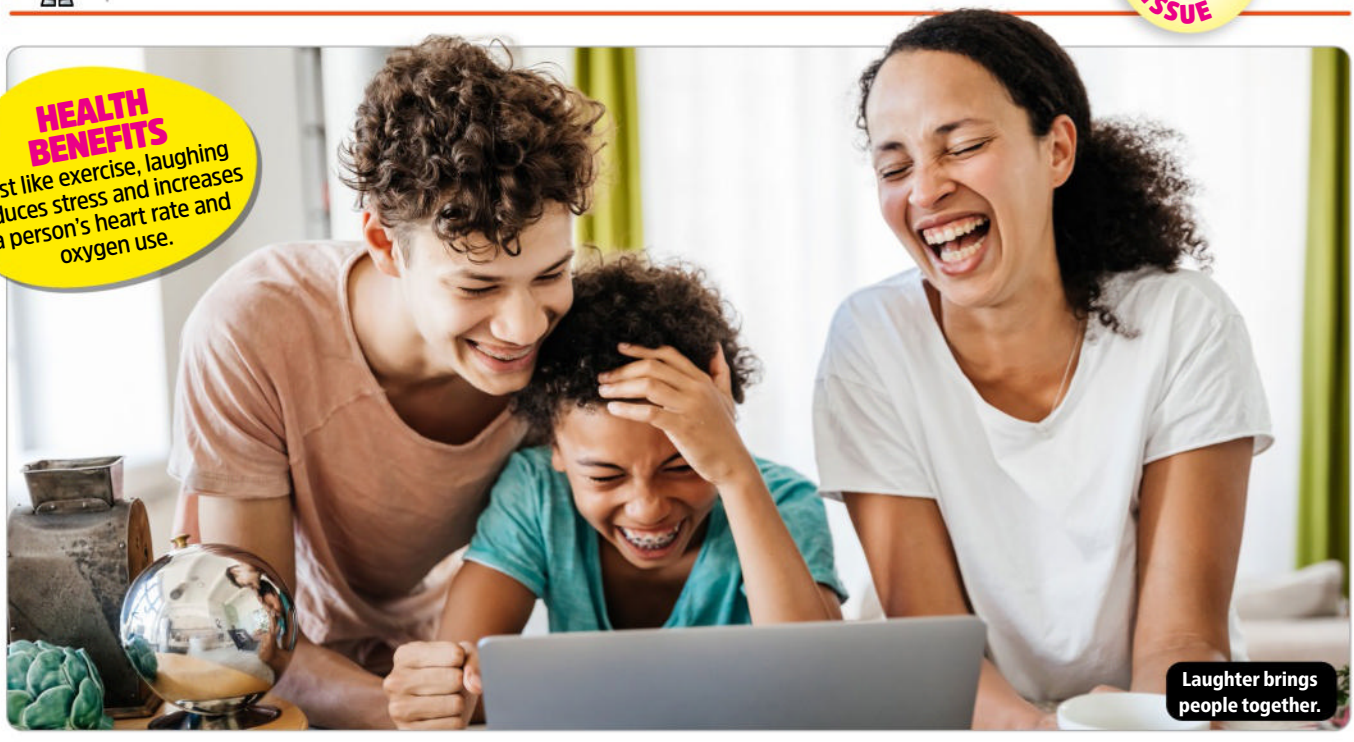


Paper fish

## Traditions around the world

April Fools' Day is enjoyed with different traditions in different countries. In France, a fooled person is called a *poisson d'avril,* which translates as April fish. French children pin paper fish on people's backs when they're not looking. In India, children play good-natured tricks on their friends. A classic tradition in Ireland is to send someone on a "fool's errand." One example is to ask an unsuspecting person to deliver a "very important letter" (that is actually not important at all) to someone else by hand. In Brazil, April 1 is known as the *dia da mentira* ("day of the lie"). And if you successfully trick someone on April Fools' Day in Greece, it is believed that you will have good luck for the rest of the year.

HUMOR ISSUE



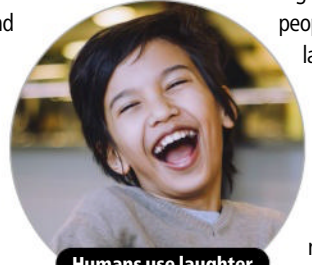
**HEALTH BENEFITS**
Just like exercise, laughing reduces stress and increases a person's heart rate and oxygen use.

Laughter brings people together.

# Laughter helps humans survive

Just as two people don't always find the same things funny, scientists have had different theories about why people laugh. According to a recent study, laughter may have helped keep humans safe for thousands of years.

Carlo Valerio Bellieni, a researcher at the University of Siena in Italy, reviewed more than 150 studies about humor and laughter over the past 10 years. By combining their results, he concluded that laughter is typically a three-step process. First, there's a surprising or unusual situation that makes someone confused or scared. Second, they realize the situation is harmless. Finally, laughing lets others know there's nothing to worry about.



Humans use laughter to communicate.

Bellieni uses the example of Homer Simpson, a cartoon character from the animated show *The Simpsons*. When Homer falls off a roof, it seems like a scary situation. But then Homer bounces like a ball, which is so ridiculous that viewers know it's harmless—and lets them know it's OK to laugh at the scene.

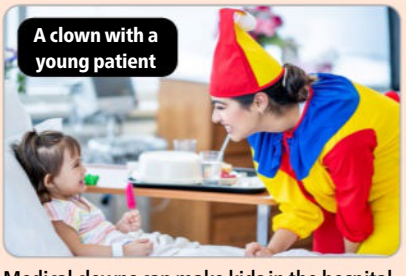
If people saw a tiger walking down the street, however, that would be terrifying because it poses a real danger. But once it walked away, people might laugh from relief. Bellieni suggests that this kind of laughter evolved (changed very slowly over time) in early humans as a way to let others know that they're safe. "Laughter could well be a signal people have used for millennia to show others that…the perceived threat has passed," he said.

Laughter could also help explain why people like others who make them laugh. Laughter is contagious and laughing together is a social activity that unites and bonds people. "If someone else's laughter provokes ours, then that person is signaling that we can relax, we are safe—and this creates trust," Bellieni said.

The study also looked at physical aspects of laughter. It is usually rhythmic and loud, which separates it from normal human speech. And the part of the brain that controls laughter controls fear and anxiety. "Laughter breaks the stress or tension of a situation," Bellieni said. That can have health benefits. Humor has been shown to lower blood pressure, strengthen immunity, and help people handle anxiety and depression.

Laughter can also make it easier for us to learn. When teachers use humor in class, students are more likely to relax, participate, and be motivated.

## Healing through humor



A clown with a young patient

Medical clowns can make kids in the hospital laugh, but these trained professionals also have a serious impact on healing. A new study from Tel Aviv University in Israel found that medical clowns have 40 different skills that can help young patients feel better physically and emotionally.

"From the moment they enter the rooms, the clowns form a bond with the patients, strengthen them, and give them power within the medical system," researcher Orit Karnieli-Miller said in a statement. Using humor, playfulness, and caring, clowns help kids share their opinions with doctors and encourage patients to cooperate with their treatment, even when it's unpleasant.

GETTY IMAGES (3); ON RIGHT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES; ALAMY; FLUENT PET

# Evidence shows Vikings sailed with their pets

New research has found that Vikings brought their horses and dogs with them when they sailed to England. The Vikings were warriors from Scandinavia (a part of Northern Europe that includes Norway, Sweden, and Denmark) who raided parts of Europe from the 800s to the 1000s.

Historians knew that Vikings had horses, dogs, and pigs. Earlier research had identified animal bones buried more than a thousand years ago at Heath Wood, a Viking burial site in England. But experts thought Viking boats were too small to carry animals and people and that Vikings had stolen animals from locals.

To find out more about the animals at the burial site, archaeologists (scientists who study objects left by people long ago) analyzed something in the bones called strontium. Strontium is a metal that naturally exists in rocks, soil, and oil. It is absorbed by plants, and when animals eat those plants the strontium shows up in their bones and teeth. The strontium in the bones matched strontium found in Scandinavia. This was the first physical evidence that Vikings' animals came with them.

**TALL TALES**
Vikings are often shown wearing helmets with horns, but there is no evidence they ever wore them.

The animal and human remains found at Heath Wood had been buried together. The scientists said the animals might have been pets, rather than just farm animals. Evidence also suggests that the animals belonged to Vikings who were of high social rank, because the remains were found buried with valuable objects like ornate swords.

An illustration of a Viking at sea

*The Houses of Parliament, Sunset* by Claude Monet (1903)

# Impressionists painted air pollution

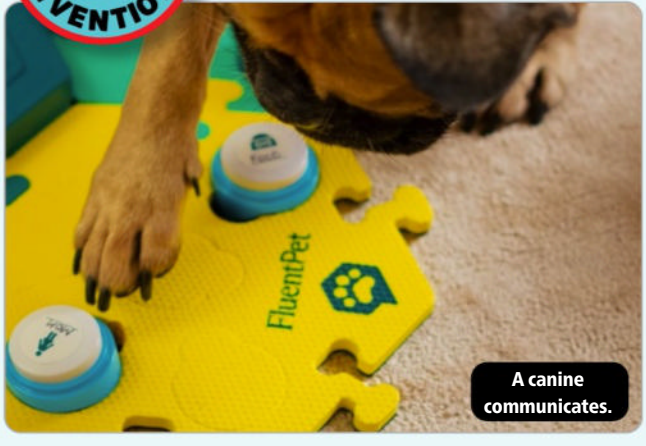
Impressionist painters Claude Monet and J.M.W. Turner showed air pollution in their work, according to a new study. Impressionism was a style of art that mostly portrayed outdoor scenes with dabs of paint that conveyed the changing nature of light, color, and texture.

Turner (1775–1851) was from the UK, while Monet (1840–1926) was from France. They lived during the Industrial Revolution (1760–1840), when Europe started using machines for manufacturing and pollution from factories began to fill the air.

Scientists studied changes in the style and color of the artists' work as air pollution increased. They found that the colors became whiter. The skies looked hazier, and objects in the distance became harder to recognize. "Over the 19th century, the atmospheric reality in London and Paris changed," the study authors said. "Turner, Monet, and others document these changes in paint."

AMAZING INVENTION

# Device lets dogs "text" owners



A canine communicates.

**Dogs may soon be able to "text" their owners when they want to go outside or play, thanks to the FluentPet Connect. With the system, pet owners record themselves saying words like "outside" or "water," then program buttons to play recordings of the words.**

**Dogs are then taught to press a specific button with their nose or paw to play a recording. The device sends a message to the FluentPet mobile app, alerting the owner. The company said most dogs can learn two buttons within a month and an average of nine words total.**

# Photos of the week

HUMOR ISSUE

COMEDY PET PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS FINALISTS

**On the fence**
This photo of a pair of street cats in Japan, the overall contest winner, was shot by Kenichi Morinaga.

**Talking to me?**
Stefan Brusius took this close-up of an alpaca.

**Behind the wheel**
A dog sits in the driver's seat in this picture by Mehmet Aslan.

KENICHI MORINAGA; JOSE BAYON; STEGAN BRUSIUS; RADIM FILIPEK; MEHMET ASLAN; BETH NOBLE

# Photos of the week

**Water baby**
Jose Bayon captured this image of his puppy Nilo.

**Open wide**
This picture of a cat was shot by Beth Noble.

**Horsing around**
Radim Filipek took this photo of a mom and her foal, named Monty.

HUMOR ISSUE

**WOW!** Dakota Albritton, the "world's tallest baseball player," pitches for the Savannah Bananas while on stilts.

Split, the mascot of the Savannah Bananas, dances before a game.

## Harlem Globetrotters

**The Harlem Globetrotters, a basketball team founded in 1926, are the original funny athletes. Players (like Torch George, above) are known for amazing ball-handling skills and trick shots, and they also get silly in games with moves like tossing confetti on fans.**

# Savannah Bananas play wacky ball

Baseball has been played since the 18th century, but one team has found a way to put a modern, comical twist on the sport. The Savannah Bananas combine traditional baseball with dancing, acrobatic plays, costumes, and stunts for a game they call Banana Ball. The team kicked off a 32-city tour in February and will be playing games across the US until mid-September.

Jesse Cole

The Bananas were founded in 2016 by Jesse Cole, a former college baseball player. In order to lure fans to the team's ballpark, Grayson Stadium, in Savannah, Georgia, Cole created an environment that was more entertaining than a typical baseball game experience. For example, in the ceremonial first pitch, someone throws a banana, and during the game, the first base coach breakdances. Cole, who attends games dressed in a yellow tuxedo, said last year, "We exist to make baseball fun."

The Bananas originally played in the Coastal Plain League, a traditional summer baseball league for college players. However, Banana Ball has become such a hit that, as of this year, they are playing a full season. They often compete against the Party Animals, a "rival team" created and run by the Savannah Bananas. On the current tour, they will also play the Charleston Dirty Birds, a similar team.

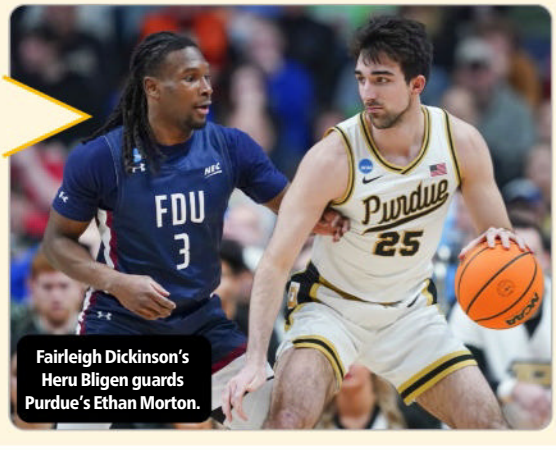
Fans of traditional baseball will notice there are different rules in Banana Ball. If a fan catches a foul ball, it counts as an out, and tie games are decided in a showdown between the hitter and a few defenders. Games are also much faster because there is a two-hour time limit. "The biggest thing that I had to get used to is the pace of play," Bananas pitcher and captain Kyle Luigs told *The Week Junior*.

Home games almost always sell out, and the team's growing fan base seems to appreciate both the humor and the skill of Banana Ball. People who come to the games are often surprised by what they see, Luigs told *The Week Junior*. He said they have told him or left comments online that say, "This is actually really, really good baseball."

## THIS WEEK'S WINNERS...

### NCAA MEN'S BASKETBALL

**The Fairleigh Dickinson Knights, a 16-seed team, scored a shocking upset by defeating the 1-seed Purdue Boilermakers, 63–58, in the first round of the NCAA men's basketball tournament. The Knights are the second 16-seed to beat a 1-seed in tournament history. The Princeton Tigers, a 15-seed, pulled off two straight upsets to make the tournament's Sweet 16—the fourth 15-seed ever to do so.**




Fairleigh Dickinson's Heru Bligen guards Purdue's Ethan Morton.

### TENNIS

**Spanish tennis player Carlos Alcaraz defeated Daniil Medvedev in two sets to win the BNP Paribas Open in Indian Wells, California. With the win, Alcaraz, age 19, returned to the world's top ranking in men's tennis.**

### SKIING

**American skier Mikaela Shiffrin won the giant slalom at the alpine skiing World Cup Finals on March 19. She set a new record for the most career women's giant slalom wins, with 21.**

**FUN FACT** University of Virginia students call themselves Wahoos, a nickname that came about in the 1890s.

Swimmers from the University of Virginia holding their trophies

# Virginia wins swimming championship

For the third consecutive year, Virginia clinched the team title at the NCAA Women's Swimming and Diving Division 1 Championship, held in Knoxville, Tennessee, from March 15–18.

With a total of 541.5 points, Virginia dominated the other teams. Texas scored a total of 414.5 points to take second, and Stanford finished third with 333 points. Louisville, North Carolina State, Ohio State, Indiana, Tennessee, Florida, and North Carolina rounded out the top 10.

Kate Douglass led Virginia with three individual wins, touching the wall first in the 200-yard individual medley (IM), 100-yard-butterfly, and 200-yard breaststroke. In all three events, she broke the NCAA, American, and US Open records. She became the first woman ever to swim the 200-yard IM under 1:50 with a time of 1:48.37.

Virginia won all five relay races, becoming only the fourth program to win all five relays at the event. In its 400-yard freestyle relay win, the team of Douglass, Gretchen Walsh, Maxine Parker, and Alex Walsh set a new American record of 3:05.84.

In the 100-yard freestyle, Virginia's Gretchen Walsh earned gold with a time of 45.61. Emma Sticklen of Texas took first in the 200-yard butterfly, coming in at 1:49.95. Alabama's Kensey McMahon won the 1,650-yard freestyle with a time of 15:43.84. Claire Curzan of Stanford won the 200-yard backstroke in 1:47.64. University of North Carolina's Aranza Vazquez took the top prize in the 1-meter and 3-meter diving events.

The NCAA Men's Swimming and Diving Division 1 Championships will take place from March 22–25 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

## COACH OF THE WEEK

Coach's Name: **Jen Paske**

Team: **Windy City FSC (figure skating)**

**"Jen pushes me to be the best skater I can be and motivates me to learn new maneuvers and tricks. She teaches me to do skills correctly so I look graceful, not like a pigeon on blades. At competitions, she tells me I am only competing against myself. She believes in me and says I am not skating to get the trophy but to get the awesome feeling I have after a great skate. She's not just a great coach but a good person too."** Molly, 9, Illinois

**To nominate a Coach of the Week, send your coach's name, photo, sport, and team to *hello@theweekjunior.com*. Include your name, age, state, and a few reasons why your coach is great.**

## SPOTLIGHT ON...

# Tommy Silva

**AGE: 21 SPORT: SOCCER**
**TEAM: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES**

**Letting loose** As a kid, I was always hanging out at my brother's soccer practices. When I started to play on teams, I just thought it was fun to kick around the ball and let off some energy. The older I got, the more I enjoyed working with teammates.

**School switch** When I was 15, I was invited to join a Major League Soccer Academy. I moved from Arizona to Utah to play full-time and live in dorms. Soccer became my life and I wanted to do everything in my power to make it a career.

**Skill drills** I love to get extra time with a ball. I find a wall and pass the ball back and forth to work on my technique. Individual practice can really help you out.

**Big growth** When I first got to college, all I cared about was myself and my own performance. As I've gotten more experience, I've changed. Now I want my teammates to have success and for the team collectively to achieve things.

**Mind trick** If I'm feeling nervous before a match, I'll try to focus on my teammates, make some jokes with them, or try to seem calm even if I'm not feeling that way inside. If my family is at the game, waving to them always calms me down a bit, too. But I think the most important thing is to try to block out the fans, the other team, or the stakes of the game you're playing and just focus on soccer because I know that's what I do best.

**Best advice** The more you play a sport when you're younger, the more it will benefit you later. And try to enjoy it—that's the most important thing.

GETTY IMAGES (2); UCLA; GETTY IMAGES (4)

HUMOR ISSUE

Adam Sandler

# Mark Twain Prize awarded

**Actor, comedian, and writer Adam Sandler has received one of the nation's highest honors for humor.**

On March 19, actor, comedian, and writer Adam Sandler received the 2023 Mark Twain Prize for American Humor at a ceremony held at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC. The prestigious award pays tribute to a person's lifetime of achievements in comedy.

The Mark Twain Prize has been awarded since 1998. Previous winners include actors Will Ferrell (*Elf*) and Tina Fey (*Mean Girls, Soul*). It is named after Mark Twain (1835–1910), who was a humorist (comedy writer), journalist, and novelist. Born Samuel Clemens, Twain wrote the famous novels *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), stories about boys growing up in the American South.

The Mark Twain Prize

Twain's other writing famously used satire, a style that conveys opinions through humor. His works addressed topics such as racial discrimination.

Sandler, age 56, began his career as a stand-up comic in New York City. He rose to fame in the 1990s as an actor on the late-night sketch comedy show *Saturday Night Live* (*SNL*). In the decades since, he has starred in dozens of films, mostly comedies, and worked as a screenwriter and producer. This month, he was named King of Comedy at the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards. "Adam has created characters that have made us laugh, cry, and cry from laughing," said Deborah F. Rutter, president of the Kennedy Center.

On the night of the Mark Twain Prize ceremony, Sandler reflected on the shift in his focus through the years. "I didn't know...when I started, that I would care about families having a good time together," he said. "But as I got older, I was like, oh, that's the best feeling—people sitting down together, having a good time, laughing."

## 3 creative talents

### Songs

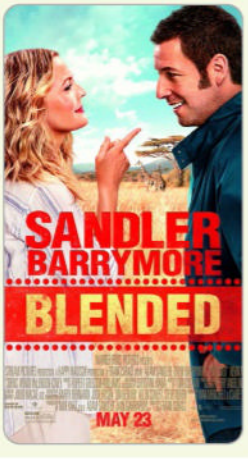
Adam Sandler is known for his songs performed as comedy bits. He co-wrote a hit for *SNL* titled "The Chanukah Song," about the Jewish holiday and celebrities who are Jewish.

### Dracula's voice

Since 2012, he has voiced Count Dracula in three *Hotel Transylvania* films. The popular franchise is set in a world where Dracula runs a hotel for legendary monsters. Singer and actress Selena Gomez voices Dracula's daughter.

### Family comedies

Much of Sandler's work is for adult audiences, but he has starred in the PG-13 comedies *Click* and *Blended*. His production company has also made PG comedies, such as *The Zookeeper* and *Home Team*.



**DID YOU KNOW?**
There are more than 300 local languages spoken across the islands of Indonesia.

*Ocean Wonderland* from *Mulyana: Modular Utopia*

# A crocheted underwater world

The USC Fisher Museum of Art in Los Angeles, California, has a new art exhibition by Indonesian artist Mulyana (he uses one name) that combines the crafts of crocheting and knitting with a message about protecting the environment. *Mulyana: Modular Utopia* is on display through April 13.

*Modular Utopia* has three sections and is filled with crocheted and knitted pieces that make up an underwater world. The area titled *Ocean Wonderland* includes 5,000 yellow and orange felt fish hanging above a colorful reef. Elsewhere in the exhibition, however, coral and other sea life are made of only gray or white string to represent the effects of polluted water. Mulyana first noticed gray coral during a snorkeling trip in Indonesia. "It was very scary," he told *The Los Angeles Times*.

Mulyana

Taking care of the Earth is important to the artist. Some of the string he uses is formed out of upcycled plastic bags and old clothing from his hometown. His creations also can be reused and rearranged for different exhibitions.

Mulyana has loved art since he was a child. He once said, "Making art makes me calm and peaceful. It has helped me through difficult times in making friends and communicating with other people." Today he relies on women in four Indonesian villages to help craft his creations.

*Modular Utopia*'s curator (person who chooses art), John Silvis, would like visitors to the museum to be inspired by the exhibition. He said that Mulyana "wants us to see that all of us have the shared responsibility in taking care of the natural world and preserving the oceans."

## READER RECOMMENDS

**Summer Camp Island** *(cartoonnetwork.com)*

**"This is my favorite show. It was created in 2018 by Julia Pott. It is about Oscar, a lovable, huggable elephant who goes on funny misadventures with his best friend, Hedgehog. When they go to their first summer camp, they soon find out that it is not a normal camp. On Summer Camp Island, anything is possible. The moon is alive! The camp counselors are witches! A favorite pair of pajamas can talk! The first couple of episodes are a little strange, but you quickly get used to the quirkiness. This show is destined to make you laugh, and even your parents will love it."** Eddie, 10, Washington

**Do you have a film or TV show to recommend to other kids? Send your review to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.**

## THIS WEEK'S WATCH LIST

### Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves

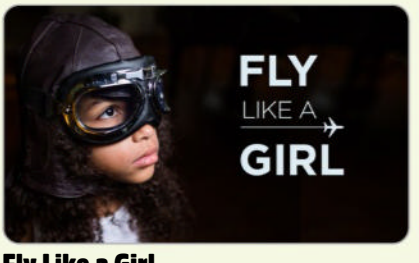
**(In theaters March 31)**

This new fantasy film was inspired by the role-playing game Dungeons & Dragons. It follows a team of thieves, each with their own heroic talents, on an epic quest to retrieve a lost relic. It is rated PG-13 for action and violence.

### Secrets of Sulphur Springs

**(Disney+) (Disney Channel) March 24, 8 pm ET**

In season three of this sci-fi series, a new evil ghost is unleashing chaos at the abandoned hotel where Griffin and his family live. He and his friends travel through the hotel's magical time portal to find out why.




### Fly Like a Girl

**(Hulu)**

The aviation industry is packed with men, but in this inspiring documentary, you'll meet women and young girls with a passion for flying. They share their stories, which range from one girl's experience creating toy airplanes to the women helping lead space shuttle missions.

MONICA OROZCO; ANDANG ISKANDAR; PARAMOUNT PICTURES/HASBRO; DISNEY/ED HERRERA; COURTESY OF INDIE ATLANTIC FILMS; CARTOON NETWORK; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2); COURTESY OF THE KENNEDY CENTER; ALAMY (2)

HUMOR ISSUE

**DID YOU KNOW?**
The first YouTube video, "Me at the Zoo," was posted in 2005 and was 18 seconds long.

HiHo Kids

Dude Perfect

Story Pirates

# Funny channels on YouTube

YouTube has more than 51 million channels on a wide range of topics. If you're looking for videos to make you smile, these three channels are good places to start.

**HiHo Kids** (youtube.com/@hihokids) HiHo Kids wants to foster curiosity—which can lead to entertaining results. In their "Kids Try" videos, participants taste foods such as onion juice or celebrities' favorite meals. In the "Don't You Dare" series, they try to sit still or not laugh while being distracted. The "Kids Meet" videos are educational, but seeing participants grossed out by critters or creeped out by a contortionist (person with a flexible body) in a suitcase will make you giggle.

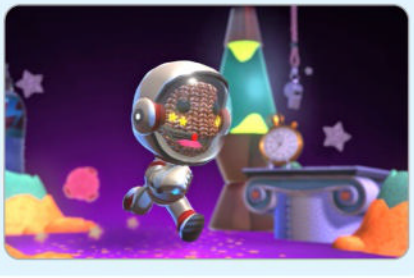
**Dude Perfect** (youtube.com/@dudeperfect) This channel's stars are a group of men who compete in wacky challenges. In Oreo Roulette, for example, each person rolls a cookie down a ramp that will drop it into one of several cups filled with items such as milk, mustard, or hot sauce. Then the roller has to eat it. Some of Dude Perfect's most popular videos include amazing trick shots and a competition on a floating obstacle course. They also have a series where they imitate characters in different settings, like at a beach or on Halloween.

**Story Pirates** (youtube.com/@StoryPirates) The Story Pirates are a group of musicians, authors, comedians, and teachers who have a popular podcast where they turn kids' stories into funny songs and tales. Their YouTube channel has clips from their PBS series called *SPTV*. One of their most popular uploads is a video called "This Movie Is About Cats Flying," based on an idea by an 8-year-old. Music videos include "Fun, Crazy, Weird Hair Store" and "I Have a Cookie."

## APP OF THE WEEK

### ULTIMATE SACKBOY
Apple App Store, Google Play

This new mobile game features the PlayStation game star Sackboy. You go on a mission with him to save his friends after they are kidnapped by the evil Vex. You'll help him collect supplies and dodge enemies as he travels around to locations including space and underwater realms.



## WEBSITE OF THE WEEK

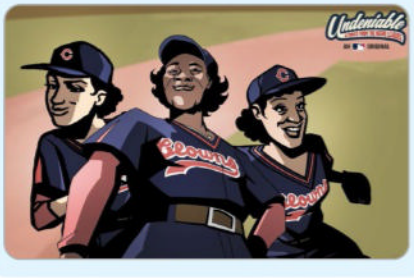
### THE DODO
thedodo.com

This site focusing on pets posts daily news articles. Expect to see stories about rescued animals and creatures doing funny things—such as a pig stealing neighbors' pumpkins. There is also a section filled with heartwarming videos that families can explore.

## VIDEO OF THE WEEK

### UNDENIABLE: WOMEN OF THE NEGRO LEAGUES
tinyurl.com/TWJUS-WOTNL

Before Black athletes were allowed to join Major League Baseball teams, they played in the Negro Leagues. This video spotlights three pioneering female athletes who competed with and against men on teams in the 1950s and 1960s.




COURTESY OF HIHO KIDS; DUDE PERFECT; COURTESY OF STORY PIRATES; SAD PUPPY; VOX MEDIA; MLB

HUMOR ISSUE

BOOK OF THE WEEK

# Jacky Ha-Ha Gets the Last Laugh

*By James Patterson and Chris Grabenstein, illustrated by Kerascoët*

(Jimmy Patterson)

It's 1991, and Jacky is planning to spend her summer running a game booth at a beach town in New Jersey. But her life changes when a famous Broadway actress offers to pay for her to attend a sleepaway camp for kids interested in theater. At Camp Footlights, Jacky worries she won't be as talented as the other campers. Her roommate is kind, but a harsh director and a diva camper aren't. After a call from her sister, Jacky stops comparing herself to the other campers. She focuses on her biggest talent: being funny. Will it be enough to earn her a place in the camp showcase? This book is filled with one-liners and jokes that will make you giggle. It's the third title in the Jacky Ha-Ha series.

## WIN A BOOK!

**We're giving away five copies of *Jacky Ha-Ha Gets the Last Laugh.***

**For a chance to win, send your name and address to *contests@theweekjunior.com* with Jacky Ha-Ha in the subject line. Enter by midnight on April 14. See theweekjunior.com/terms for complete rules.**

ASK THE AUTHOR

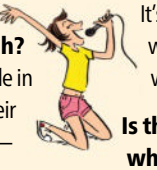
## Chris Grabenstein

We spoke to the co-author of the Book of the Week.

**Were you in school plays?**
Yes! I liked playing funny characters the most, even if the parts were smaller.

**What makes you laugh?**
Physical humor—the style in which comedians use their bodies as part of the act—cracks me up.

**How did you start writing?**
While working in comedy, I was trying to be cast in something. When I got a role in a commercial, all I did was walk back and forth. That's when I decided I wanted to try another creative outlet.



**Any advice on telling jokes?**
It's your take on the world that makes what you say funny.

**Is there someone who has inspired your writing?**
Yes, James Patterson, my co-author. He once told me: "Always write as if nobody has to or wants to read anything that you've written. Don't be boring!"

## 4 new joke books that are full of laughs

If you like to read and tell jokes, these picks provide hilarious material.

### You're Joking Me: Jokes for Kids by a Kid

*By William Daniel*

(Revell)

Written by a sixth-grader, this book contains more than 400 puns, riddles, knock-knock jokes, and other zingers. The wordplay is especially funny. Here's a wordplay joke to tell your friends: "What piece of cloth is the sleepiest? A napkin!" *Ages 8 and up*

### The Big Book of Belly Laugh Jokes, Riddles, and Puns for Kids

*By Sky Pony editors, illustrated by Bethany Straker*

(Sky Pony)

In this illustrated book, you'll get 700 new and classic jokes on topics ranging from food to animals to sports. You might like telling this joke: "What do you call cheese that doesn't belong to you? Nacho cheese!" *Ages 8 and up*

### Laugh-Out-Loud: The Big Book of Knock-Knock Jokes

*By Rob Elliott*

(HarperCollins)

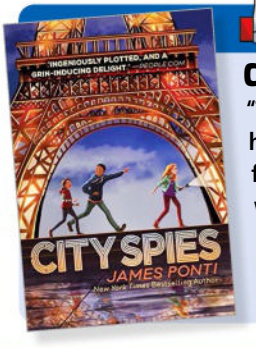
The jokes in this book are divided into four topics: people, things, places, and holidays. Some fun ones involve puns on proper names. Try telling this joke: "Knock, knock. Who's there? Philip. Philip who? Philip my glass with some water, please." *Ages 8 and up*

### LOL 101: A Kid's Guide to Writing Jokes

*By David Roth and Rinee Shah*

(Chronicle Books)

This book shows you how to use wordplay, exaggeration, and the element of surprise to write jokes, and the authors reveal what steps they take to write jokes. One of the jokes: "Where did the dog leave her car? The barking lot!" Tips on how to perform jokes to get big laughs are included. *Ages 8 and up*




## READER RECOMMENDS

**City Spies** *By James Ponti*

**"This amazing book is filled with mystery, suspense, friendship, and humor. Read about how a teenager named Sara and other kids in foster care could face juvenile detention but then get the chance to work with a secret group of spies. Their mission is risky and requires a wall climb, a chase, and more. Can Sara and her team succeed? Or will they get caught in the process?"** Sienna, 10, Michigan

**Do you have a book to recommend? Send your review to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.**

BOOKS AND ILLUSTRATION: COURTESY THE PUBLISHERS; AUTHOR: ELENA SEIBERT

**DID YOU KNOW?**
The first Sunday newspaper comics to appear in color were published in 1894 in the *New York World*.

# Create your own comics

## This art form is a fun way to bring out your sense of humor.

If you like to draw—and make people laugh—creating comics can be a fun activity to try. A comic tells a story with illustration and words. You can make a single comic or draw a comic strip in several panels (boxes). *The Week Junior* spoke with comic book author Jarrett Lerner, who said, "Comics combine two languages: the visual and the verbal." Here, he shares how you can get started.

### Get inspired

The first step to coming up with a comic is to read other comics, whether in comic books, funny graphic novels, or the comics section of a newspaper. "Seeing how other people create comics is a great way to get a feel for the language of comics and the possibilities for them," says Lerner. As you read the comics, consider how the artist made the pictures and words work together. What do you notice about the illustrations? What words were used to tell a joke or story?

Start in pencil and color in later.

### Sketch some ideas

Think about what you want to draw. Use a sketchpad to doodle your character or characters first. Will they be animals, people, or maybe both? Consider what you want your comic to convey. "It might take some time, but gradually, you'll get a sense of what you need to show and say," says Lerner. Sketch and scribble some of those thoughts down into a sketchbook.

### Develop your main character

Once you have an idea of what you want to draw, focus on your main character. Who is it, and what are they like? Main characters often have something they really want, whether it's a boy who wants to finally kick the football or a spoiled pet that craves delicious food. Think about what your character wants—and what might be in their way. "For me, that is the ultimate driver of story: a character who wants something and faces obstacles getting it," says Lerner.

### Balance words and text

Your comic may better reveal what your character is thinking or what is happening if you add words. You could add a text bubble above a character to show a funny thought or write dialogue (when characters talk to each other). Try a few options to see what you like, and don't worry if you get stuck. Says Lerner: "By pushing through challenges, you'll become a stronger creator."

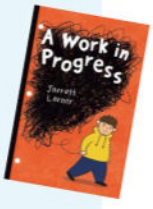
### Put it all together

Once you've decided on your characters, practiced your drawings, and written some sample text, you're ready to make your comic. Use a pencil to draw and write it. Then you can "ink" it: Trace over your work with markers or colored pencils to create the finished piece. The most important thing about creating? "Have fun!"says Lerner.

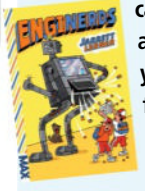
## Ask a comic book author

Jarrett Lerner—who is the award-winning creator of the *EngiNerds* and *Geeger the Robot* series and other best-selling books—shares what it's like to create comics for a living.

**How did you get such a cool job?**



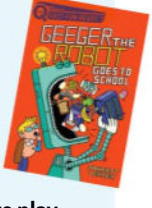

I worked hard, but I also had a lot of fun. If kids think they want to have a job like mine someday, the best thing they can do is read, write, and draw. And share your work! Ask for feedback from your friends and family, and use it to make your work even better.




**If you could be any comic book character, who would it be?**

I'd like to be myself but able to spend time in some of my favorite comic worlds. Like the one in Jarod Roselló's two *Red Panda and Moon Bear* graphic novels or the one in Aron Nels Steinke's *Mr. Wolf's Class* series.

**Where do you get inspiration for your ideas?**




Reading is a big one for me. So I'm always reaching for books to get inspired and excited about creating myself. I also always try to make plenty of time to play with my kids. They are the most creative people I know. Playing with them always leaves me inspired and fired up to create.

GETTY IMAGES (2); COURTESY JARRETT LERNER; BOOKS: COURTESY THE PUBLISHERS

# Share your comic with us!

Use the space below to create your own comic to send to us at *The Week Junior* (see instructions at bottom of form).
If you use pencil, be sure to go over your finished work with ink or marker. Your comic may be published in an upcoming issue!

First name: _____ Age: _____ State: _____

To share this form with us, ask an adult to email it to *hello@theweekjunior.com*. Extra forms can be found at kids.theweekjunior.com/activities. We may publish some submissions in future issues.
(By submitting this form, you give *The Week Junior* consent to print it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.)

# Keyword crossword

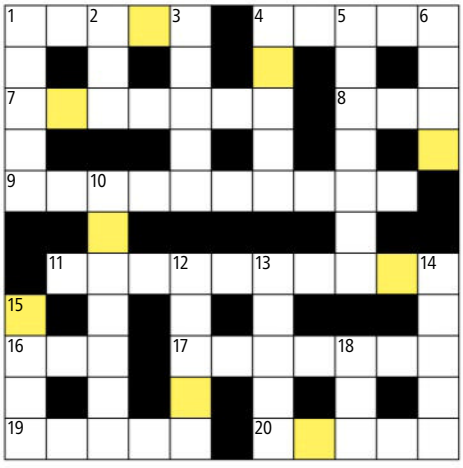
Once you have completed the crossword, transfer the letters in the yellow boxes, in order, into the boxes below to get the answer to the Keyword question.

**ACROSS**

1 Lawn stuff
4 Feared marine creature that can produce up to 30,000 teeth in its lifetime
7 Breakfast associated with a man in Quaker clothing
8 Be a candidate for office
9 Part of the train that has the engine
11 They're sometimes referred to as "shades"
16 It flows from a pen
17 Japanese warrior
19 Opponent in a war
20 Hand used by about 90% of people when writing

**DOWN**

1 "Watch out" noise from a watchdog
2 Class in which you might learn to make a collage
3 White mist visible over boiling water
4 In bowling, it's two standing pins that are far apart
5 Gets to the destination
6 Person who might be the head of a monarchy
10 Small laugh
12 Description of a day with a lot of wind
13 A knight is covered in this
14 A tee, pullover, or button-down
15 The effect of the Moon's pull on the ocean
18 Covering for an area of the floor



**Keyword question: On April Fools' Day in 1957, British television aired a fake documentary that supposedly showed farmers harvesting what kind of food from trees?**

# THREE FOR ALL

Sort this list into three familiar three-part phrases, like THREE-RING CIRCUS or SALT LAKE CITY.

**UP ALL OUT LAUGH KIDDING**
**LOUD STAND ASIDE COMIC**

# CODE CRACKER

In this coded list of synonyms for "funny," every letter has been replaced with a substitute. The same substitutions are used throughout the list. Hint: Every X here is an uncoded S. Use the letter patterns you find to crack the code. (NEED ANOTHER HINT? Check the bottom of the page.)

S - S
X M P J X A O M B B M Z V

V C B E C X B M Z V

O Y C V Q Y E O J

Q M O Y K M D C X

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.

# Cutting room

Divide this grid into five sections so each section consists of five adjacent boxes containing the numbers 1–5. The sections may have different shapes.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 2 |
| 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| 2 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| 4 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| 5 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 |

# Spot the difference

These two pictures of a chicken crossing the road appear to be the same, but take a closer look. There are actually five differences. Can you see them?

PUZZLES BY PUZZABILITY



**Code cracker hint:** MZV, which is at the end of two answers, is ING.

# That's unbelievable!

## Drew Barrymore loves funny news

For this week's humor issue, Drew Barrymore, host and executive producer of *The Drew Barrymore Show*, edited this "That's Unbelievable!" page. On her show, Drew likes to highlight many types of news stories, and she particularly likes stories that spread joy and humor. "I love learning new things, and if they are surprising, that's even more of a thrill!" she said. Here are the four stories she thought were unbelievably fun.

## Who says you can't have pizza for breakfast?

A bagel shop in Queens, New York, has become famous for serving a massive pizza bagel. Topped with homemade sauce, mozzarella cheese, and fresh oregano, the 10-pound bagel takes about 24 hours to create. The staff scoops out some of the dough to make a side of garlic knots with each order.

**Drew's take:** "Mamma mia, this bagel is BIG! We had one at the Drew's News desk and it was 10 pounds of amazingness. Five stars!"

## Bear takes 400 selfies

Colorado park staff found out that taking selfies isn't a hobby only for humans. They had set up a motion-detecting camera to snap pictures as wildlife passed by. But one bear stopped and posed for about 400 photos. A modeling expert called the photo shoot "iconic."

**Drew's take:** "I scrolled through 100 of these selfies, and I can confirm that this bear is fierce!"

## Teacher makes huggable monsters

A teacher in Australia brought her kindergarten students' creativity to life. She first asked each child to draw a monster from their imagination. Then she sewed a plush monster that matched the drawing and gave it to the student as a surprise. One parent said he was "spellbound by how amazing they all looked."

**Drew's take:** "Teachers are real-life superheroes! They shine their light, energy, compassion, and attention on their students and make their minds grow. If you appreciate your teachers, don't forget to tell them, A LOT!"

## These grandmothers cook for a crowd

Eating at Enoteca Maria is like having dinner at grandma's house, thanks to the New York restaurant's "nonnas of the world." ("Nonna" means grandmother in Italian.) Owner Joe Scaravella hired Italian grandmothers to make meals from his childhood, then opened the kitchen to women from across the globe—Japanese, Indian, Brazilian, and more—to cook dishes from their own cultures. Every day, diners clap for the cooks. "It's like a family feeling," said Nonna Yumi Komatsudaira.

**Drew's take:** "This is food for the soul. There is nothing better than history, tradition, and love passed down through the kitchen. Thank you, grannies!"

BOULDER OSMP/TWITTER; BRANDON HAYES; REID PARKER AND OTHER PARENTS OF CLASS FC/TWITTER; ENOTECA MARIA; CBS; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2)

HUMOR ISSUE

## Editor's note

This week we're all smiles as we bring you our first-ever Humor Issue. We got the idea from YOU, our readers! You tell us every week how much you love our more humorous stories, and you send us all kinds of funny notes and photos. You have a great perspective on the lighter side of the news, and we wanted to give you something special to celebrate that. You'll find humor-related content throughout our pages—wherever you see our Humor Issue icon. I would like to offer my warmest thanks to Drew Barrymore for guest-editing this week's "That's Unbelievable!" page (p27). Everyone at *The Week Junior* is a huge fan of *The Drew Barrymore Show*, the program she hosts and co-produces, and especially her fun "Drew's News" segments. As she told us, "We think filling up the good news tank is good for the soul." Thanks, Drew! We couldn't agree more.

Andrea Barbalich
Editor-in-Chief

## CHARITY OF THE WEEK

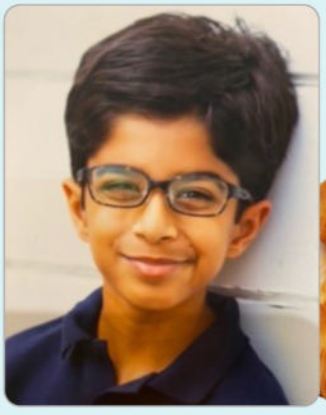
### Hilarity for Charity

**Founded by Lauren Miller Rogen and Seth Rogen, a couple who are actors and comedians, this organization raises awareness about Alzheimer's disease, a brain disorder. It holds fundraising events featuring comedy and runs online support groups for family members of people affected by the disease. The group has raised more than $18 million since 2012. Find out more at hilarityforcharity.org.**

HFC

## YOUR PHOTOS

**Earlier this year, we asked you to tell us what makes you laugh and smile. Thank you to everyone who contributed! Here are some of your great responses.**

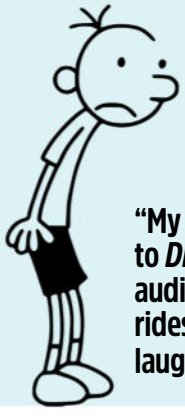


**"I like Garfield because his antics make me laugh."** Rohan, 11, California

**"What do stair lawyers deal with? Answer: staircases."** Grace, 8, Texas

**"What happened when the FBI agent went to sleep? He went undercover."** Daniel, 9, New Jersey

**"Interviewer: What is your profession? Me: I'm a zombie hunter. Interviewer: But zombies don't exist. Me: What do you think happened to them? Interviewer: (mind blown)"** Henry, 10, Tennessee



**"My family and I listen to *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* audiobooks on long car rides. They always make us laugh!"** Vincent, 12, Arizona

GETTY IMAGES (2); ALAMY; ART BY JEFF KINNEY; ON RIGHT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES; ALAMY (3); BOOKS: COURTESY THE PUBLISHERS

**THE WEEK Junior IT'S YOUR TURN** Email your news, views, and photos to *hello@theweekjunior.com.*

# Your turn

"My brother and I think science comics are funny because the jokes are 'punny.' Get it? I am holding a picture of my favorite page from a science comic called *The Brain*." David, 10 (right), and Michael, 10, New York

"There are certain things that make me laugh a lot, like the TV show *I Love Lucy*. My friends really make me laugh a lot too. Also, I like funny T-shirts and bumper stickers that are parodies of actual things." Anika, 13, North Carolina

"I think a super-funny movie is *Minions: The Rise of Gru*. I love it because the Minions are soooo silly!" Nola, 8, Wisconsin

"*The Amazing World of Gumball* is a hysterical cartoon about a cat named Gumball and his family and friends. The episodes do not connect to make a story, and they are only about 10 minutes long. My favorite character is Darwin because he is really cute. Darwin is a goldfish with legs." Mia, 9, Connecticut

## Puzzle answers (from page 26)

**Keyword answer:** spaghetti

**Code cracker**
side-splitting
gut-busting
laughable
hilarious

**Three for all**
all kidding aside
laugh out loud
stand-up comic

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 2 |
| 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| 2 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| 4 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| 5 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 |

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| G | R | A | S | S | | S | H | A | R | K |
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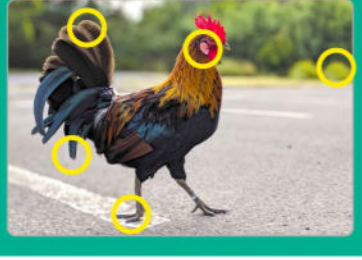


**Quiz answers** (from page 30)
**1** a) France **2** Artemis III **3** b) Dude Perfect **4** True **5** a) 1942 **6** True **7** b) Adam Sandler **8** Bear **9** c) Fairleigh Dickinson Knights **10** False. It has begun in California. **11** *Abbott Elementary* **12** True **13** b) French bulldog **14** False. It is called Camp Footlights. **15** Banana Ball

We want to hear from you! To have your letters, photos, nominations, recommendations, or ideas considered for inclusion in the magazine, please include your full name, age, and state with your submission. By emailing your submission to us, you give *The Week Junior* consent to publish it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.

# How much of this week's news can you remember?

**1** In which country do children pin paper fish on people's backs for April Fools' Day?
a) France b) Ireland c) Greece

a☐ b☐ c☐

**2** What is the name of the NASA mission that will put the first woman on the Moon?

**3** Which YouTube channel is about a group of men competing in goofy challenges, such as trick shots?

a) HiHo Kids b) Dude Perfect c) Story Pirates

a☐ b☐ c☐

**4** True or false? All clownfish are born males.

True☐ False☐

**5** In what year did the youth STEM competition called the Science Talent Search first take place?

a) 1942 b) 1957 c) 1971

a☐ b☐ c☐

**6** True or false? Vikings brought their horses and dogs with them when they sailed to England.

True☐ False☐

**7** Who received this year's Mark Twain Prize for American Humor?

a) Will Ferrell b) Adam Sandler c) Tina Fey

a☐ b☐ c☐

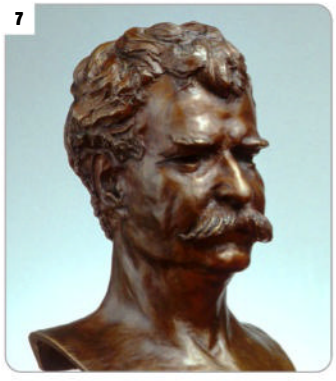
**8** What kind of animal took hundreds of selfies with a motion-detecting camera in Colorado?

4

12

10

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.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15

**9** Which team became the second 16-seed to beat a 1-seed in the NCAA basketball tournament?

a) Purdue Boilermakers

b) Princeton Tigers

c) Fairleigh Dickinson Knights

a☐ b☐ c☐

**10** True or false? A "superbloom" of wildflowers has begun in Connecticut.

True☐ False☐

**11** Writer and actress Quinta Brunson is the creator of what hit sitcom?

**12** True or false? During the holy month of Ramadan, many people do not eat or drink in the daytime.

True☐ False☐

**13** Which breed of dog was named the most popular of 2022 by the American Kennel Club?

a) Golden retriever b) French bulldog

c) German shepherd

a☐ b☐ c☐

**14** True or false? In the book *Jacky Ha-Ha Gets the Last Laugh*, Jacky attends a camp called Camp Headlights.

True☐ False☐

**15** What is the modern, comical brand of baseball played by the Savannah Bananas called?

THE WEEK Junior

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HUMOR ISSUE

## READY FOR SPRING

In a recent survey, about 66% of people who have pets said they like to change their pet's accessories each season.

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